

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. APPLN. NO. 10/607,250
ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. Q76861

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Patent Office for acknowledging Applicants' claim to foreign priority. In the next Communication from the Patent Office, Applicants respectfully request that the Patent Office indicate that the certified copies of the priority documents, Japanese Patent Application No. 2002-189497 dated June 28, 2002 and Japanese Patent Application No. 2002-384164 dated November 29, 2002, have been made of record in the file. Applicants filed certified copies of the priority documents on June 27, 2003, and enclose a copy of the stamped filing receipt evidencing the receipt of the priority documents at the Patent Office, and copies of the facepages of the priority documents and the Claim for Convention Priority that were filed on June 27, 2003.

Applicants thank the Patent Office for initialing the references listed on the PTO/SB/08 A & B form submitted with the Information Disclosure Statement filed on June 27, 2003 and returning an initialed copy of the PTO/SB/08 A & B, thereby confirming that the four of the five listed references have been considered. Applicants request that the Patent Office consider Japanese Patent Application No. 48-8005, which was listed on the PTO/SB/08 A & B form filed on June 27, 2003, and return an initialed copy of the PTO/SB/08 A & B form.

Claims 1-18 have been examined on their merits.

The Patent Office objects to claims 2 and 11 as being dependent upon rejected base claims, but indicates that claims 2 and 11 would otherwise be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicants thank the Patent Office for indicating that claims 2 and 11 would be allowed if rewritten in independent form. Applicants herein cancel claims 1 and 10 without

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prejudice and/or disclaimer, rewrite claims 2 and 11 in independent form and amend claims 3-7 and 12-16 to properly depend from now independent claims 2 and 11, respectively.

Claims 2-9 and 11-18 are all the claims presently pending in the application.

1. Claims 1, 3, 10 and 12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by *Abe et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,499,822). The rejection of claims 1 and 10 is now moot due to their cancellation. Applicants traverse the rejection of claims 3 and 12 for at least the reasons discussed below.

Claims 3 and 12 depend from claims 2 and 11, respectively. Claims 2 and 11 have been rewritten in independent form, and the Patent Office has indicated that claims 2 and 11 would be allowed if rewritten in independent form. Applicants submit that claims 3 and 12 are allowable as well, at least by virtue of their dependency from claims 2 and 11. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the § 102(e) rejection of claims 3 and 12.

2. Claims 6 and 15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over *Abe et al.* in view of *Carley* (U.S. Patent No. 3,790,703). Applicants traverse the rejection of claims 6 and 15 for at least the reasons discussed below.

Claims 6 and 15 depend from claims 2 and 11, respectively. Claims 2 and 11 have been rewritten in independent form, and the Patent Office has indicated that claims 2 and 11 would be allowed if rewritten in independent form. Applicants submit that claims 6 and 15 are allowable

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as well, at least by virtue of their dependency from claims 2 and 11. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the § 103(a) rejection of claims 6 and 15.

3. Claims 4, 7-9, 13 and 16-18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over *Abe et al.* in view of *Takanaka* (U.S. Patent No. 6,347,853). Applicants traverse the rejection of claims 4, 7-9, 13 and 16-18 for at least the reasons discussed below.

Claims 4, 7-9, 13 and 16-18 depend from claims 2 and 11, respectively. Claims 2 and 11 have been rewritten in independent form, and the Patent Office has indicated that claims 2 and 11 would be allowed if rewritten in independent form. Applicants submit that claims 4, 7-9, 13 and 16-18 are allowable as well, at least by virtue of their dependency from claims 2 and 11. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the § 103(a) rejection of claims 4, 7-9, 13 and 16-18.

4. Claims 5 and 14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over *Abe et al.* in view of *Ogasawara et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,070,970). Applicants traverse the rejection of claims 5 and 14 for at least the reasons discussed below.

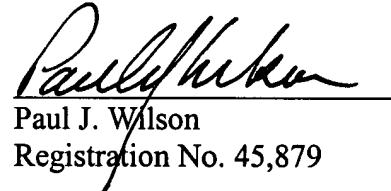
Claims 5 and 14 depend from claims 2 and 11, respectively. Claims 2 and 11 have been rewritten in independent form, and the Patent Office has indicated that claims 2 and 11 would be allowed if rewritten in independent form. Applicants submit that claims 5 and 14 are allowable as well, at least by virtue of their dependency from claims 2 and 11. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the § 103(a) rejection of claims 5 and 14.

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In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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WASHINGTON OFFICE
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